

Statement of Kaitlyn Krauss
Senior at Wesleyan University, student leader of WESTAND, Wesleyan's anti-
genocide student group, to the
Education Committee, Connecticut General Assembly
29 February 2008

Chairman Senator Gaffey, Chairman Representative Fleischmann, and Members of the Committee, I deeply appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today at this hearing on the Genocide Awareness Education bill. I am here today because I believe in the youth of tomorrow and I feel I have a responsibility to provide them with the tools to end and prevent the death and destruction that is occurring around the world. We have repeatedly said "Never again," yet here we are in 2008 marking the 5th year of the genocide in Darfur, Sudan. The fresh, progressive ideas that are needed to secure peace in Darfur, rebuild the communities and villages in south Sudan, and prevent future crimes against humanity will only be possible if we start exposing the youth of America to a history emitted from the textbooks.

I lead a Wesleyan anti-genocide student group, and I have initiated a genocide education campaign in Middletown, CT. We are conducting workshops in Middletown High School where we provide the students with the resources and tools they need to create their own presentations about the genocide in Darfur, Sudan. In April and May, we will have these high school students give their presentations to individual classes at Woodrow Wilson Middle School. These high school and middle school students will work to educate each other about the atrocities occurring across the world. This is a great example of how genocide education increases students' interest in education and motivates students to take action while highlighting the gaps in the schools' current curricula. As members of my student group and I spoke with teachers at Woodrow Wilson and Middletown High, we were amazed at how eager and willing the teachers were to have their classes participate in our campaign. One middle school teacher explicitly told us her students needed to know there was a world out there beyond Middletown. She said her students were increasingly apathetic. We were told to not hold anything back. It's clear to me that students and teachers in Connecticut not only want genocide education to be a part of their curriculum, but they also desire the necessary training and resources, which is why we want this bill to be expanded to provide these things.

This expanded bill would ensure that we meet our moral obligation to remember the victims of genocides, intervene in current genocides, and prevent future ones from occurring. Genocide education makes better students, better citizens, and better leaders.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I am prepared to answer any questions.

Public Hearing Testimony Speaker: *Kaitlyn Krauss*

Date: *2/29/08* Bill Number: *5595*